AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1-22   Canceled

23.   (Original)   A method of ameliorating symptoms of a condition associated with inflammation, said method comprising:

identifying a subject having symptoms of a condition associated with inflammation; and

modulating in said subject the level or activity of the NF-HEV polypeptide or a biologically active fragment thereof, thereby ameliorating symptoms of a condition associated with inflammation.

24.   (Original)   The method of Claim 23, wherein the level or activity of said NF-HEV polypeptide or a biologically active fragment thereof is modulated by altering the expression of a nucleic acid encoding said NF-HEV polypeptide or a biologically active fragment thereof.

25.   (Original)   The method of Claim 23, wherein the level or activity of said NF-HEV polypeptide or a biologically active fragment thereof is modulated by administering a compound to said subject.

26.   (Original)   The method of Claim 23, wherein modulating the level or activity of said NF-HEV polypeptide or a biologically active fragment thereof modulates the level or activity of a pro-inflammatory chemokine.

27.   Cancelled

28.   (Original)   The method of Claim 26, wherein the level or activity of said pro-inflammatory chemokine is reduced.

29.   (Original)   The method of Claim 23, wherein the level or activity of said NF-HEV polypeptide or a biologically active fragment thereof is reduced.

30.   (Original)   The method of Claim 29, wherein the level or activity of said NF-HEV polypeptide or a biologically active fragment thereof is reduced by reducing the expression of a nucleic acid encoding said NF-HEV polypeptide or a biologically active fragment thereof.

31.   (Original)   The method of Claim 30, wherein the expression of a nucleic acid encoding said NF-HEV polypeptide or a biologically active fragment thereof is reduced by providing an antisense nucleic acid complementary to at least a portion of said NF-HEV polypeptide or a biologically active fragment thereof.

32.   (Original)   The method of Claim 29, wherein the level or activity of said NF-HEV polypeptide or a biologically active fragment thereof is reduced by reducing the activity or level of a pro-inflammatory cytokine.

33.   (Original)   A method of ameliorating the symptoms of a condition associated with inflammation, said method comprising modulating the level of transcription of at least one promoter responsive to an NF-HEV polypeptide or biologically active fragment thereof.

34.   (Original)   The method of Claim 33, wherein the level of transcription of said at least one promoter responsive to an NF-HEV polypeptide or biologically active fragment thereof is reduced.

35.   (Original)   The method of Claim 33, wherein modulating the level or activity of said promoter modulates the level or activity of a pro-inflammatory chemokine.

37.   (Original)   The method of Claim 35, wherein the level or activity of said pro-inflammatory chemokine is reduced.

38-57   Canceled

58.   (Currently amended)   A method of identifying a candidate inhibitor of a̶ an NF-HEV polypeptide, said method comprising:

        a)   contacting a̶ an NF-HEV polypeptide selected from the group consisting of: a biologically active NF-HEV polypeptide, a polypeptide having at least about 80% amino acid sequence identity to a biologically active NF-HEV polypeptide, and biologically active fragments of either of the foregoing a̶c̶c̶o̶r̶d̶i̶n̶g̶ t̶o̶ C̶l̶a̶i̶m̶ 5̶0̶ o̶r̶ C̶l̶a̶i̶m̶ 5̶2̶ o̶r̶ a̶ f̶r̶a̶g̶m̶e̶n̶t̶ t̶h̶e̶r̶e̶o̶f̶ w̶h̶i̶c̶h̶ c̶o̶m̶p̶r̶i̶s̶e̶s̶ a̶ c̶o̶n̶t̶i̶g̶u̶o̶u̶s̶ s̶p̶a̶n̶ o̶f̶ a̶t̶ l̶e̶a̶s̶t̶ 6̶ c̶o̶n̶t̶i̶g̶u̶o̶u̶s̶ a̶m̶i̶n̶o̶ a̶c̶i̶d̶s̶ o̶f̶ t̶h̶e̶ p̶o̶l̶y̶p̶e̶p̶t̶i̶d̶e̶ a̶c̶c̶o̶r̶d̶i̶n̶g̶ t̶o̶ C̶l̶a̶i̶m̶ 5̶0̶ o̶r̶ C̶l̶a̶i̶m̶ 5̶2̶ with a test compound; and

b) determining whether said compound selectively binds to said polypeptide, wherein a determination that said compound selectively binds to said polypeptide indicates that said compound is a candidate inhibitor of said polypeptide.

59.   (Original)   The method of Claim 58, wherein a determination that said compound selectively binds to said polypeptide indicates that said compound is a candidate compound for the treatment of a chronic inflammatory disorder.

60.   (Currently amended) A method of identifying a candidate inhibitor of a-an NF-HEV polypeptide selected from the group consisting of: a biologically active NF-HEV polypeptide, a polypeptide having at least about 80% amino acid sequence identity to a biologically active NF-HEV polypeptide, and biologically active fragments of either of the foregoing, of Claim 50 or Claim 52 or a fragment comprising a contiguous span of at least 6 contiguous amino acids of the polypeptide according to Claim 50 or Claim 52, said method comprising:

a) contacting said polypeptide with a test compound; and

b) determining whether said compound selectively inhibits at least one activity of said polypeptide, wherein a determination that said compound selectively inhibits at least one activity of said polypeptide indicates that said compound is a candidate inhibitor of said polypeptide.

61.   (Original)   The method of Claim 60, wherein a determination that said compound selectively inhibits said at least one biological activity of said polypeptide indicates that said compound is a candidate compound for the treatment of a chronic inflammatory disorder.

62.   (Currently amended) A method of identifying a candidate NF-HEV inhibitor, said method comprising:

a) providing a cell comprising a—an NF-HEV polypeptide or a fragment comprising at least 6 consecutive amino acids thereof;

b) contacting said cell with a test compound; and

c) determining whether said compound selectively inhibits at least one NF-HEV activity, wherein a determination that said compound selectively inhibits activity of said polypeptide indicates that said compound is a candidate inhibitor of said polypeptide.

63.   The method of Claim 62, wherein a determination that said compound selectively inhibits said at least one biological activity of said polypeptide indicates that said compound is a candidate compound for the treatment of a chronic inflammatory disorder.

64.   The method of Claim 62, wherein step (a) comprises introducing a nucleic acid comprising the nucleotide sequence <u>selected from the group consisting of: a biologically active NF-HEV polypeptide, a polypeptide having at least about 80% amino acid sequence identity to a biologically active NF-HEV polypeptide, and biologically active fragments of either of the foregoing;</u> ~~encoding said NF-HEV polypeptide according to any one of Claims 38, 39, 42 or 43~~ into said cell.

65.   The method of ~~any of Claims 58 to 64~~ <u>Claim 60</u>, wherein said NF-HEV activity comprises modulating gene expression in an endothelial cell.

66.   The method of ~~any of Claims 58 to 64~~ <u>Claim 60</u>, wherein said NF-HEV activity comprises modulating the inflammatory potential of an endothelial cell.

67.   The method of ~~any of Claims 58 to 64~~ <u>Claim 60</u>, wherein said NF-HEV activity comprises modulating the phenotype of an endothelial cell.

68.   The method of ~~any of Claims 58 to 64~~ <u>Claim 60</u>, wherein said NF-HEV activity comprises regulating HEV-like vessel development or maintenance.

69.   The method of ~~any of Claims 58 to 64~~ <u>Claim 60</u>, wherein said NF-HEV activity comprises modulating the differentiation or proliferation of an endothelial cell.

70.   The method of ~~any of Claims 58 to 64~~ <u>Claim 60</u>, wherein said NF-HEV polypeptide or fragment thereof comprises a homeodomain-like helix-turn-helix (HTH) DNA-binding domain.

71.   The method of ~~any of Claims 58 to 64~~ <u>Claim 58</u>, wherein said NF-HEV polypeptide or fragment thereof ~~comprises~~ <u>consists essentially of</u> the amino acid sequence of positions 61 to 78 of SEQ ID NO: 1 or 63 to 80 of SEQ ID NO: 2.

72-124 Canceled

125.   (Currently amended)   A method of identifying a candidate inhibitor of NF-HEV activity, said method comprising:

(a) providing a-an NF-HEV polypeptide of SEQ ID NOs: 4-5 or, a fragment comprising a contiguous span of at least 6 contiguous amino acids of a polypeptide according to SEQ ID NOs: 4-5;

(b) providing a-an NF-HEV target polypeptide or a fragment thereof; and

(c) determining whether a test compound selectively inhibits the ability of said NF-HEV polypeptide to bind to said NF-HEV target polypeptide, wherein a determination that said test compound selectively inhibits the ability of said NF-HEV polypeptide to bind to said NF-HEV target polypeptide indicates that said compound is a candidate inhibitor of NF-HEV activity.

126   Canceled

127.   (New) The method of Claim 23, wherein said NF-HEV polypeptide or biologically active fragment thereof comprises an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of amino acids 1-65 of SEQ ID NOs: 4-6.

128.   (New) The method of Claim 33, wherein said NF-HEV polypeptide or biologically active fragment thereof comprises an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of amino acids 1-65 of SEQ ID NOs: 4-6.